

Vision for Excellence in Education and Arkansas Accountability System in ESSA Steering Committee

October 26, 2016



A *Vision of Excellence*
for Arkansas Education

“A Perspective from Within”

Goal

“A clear vision and new direction in Arkansas education, a vision defined and a plan designed by practicing educators.”



How Did We Get Here?

- Process started in the fall of 2015.
- Initially involved small committees, the AAEA Board of Directors, and then all AAEA members.

How Did We Get Here?

- The goal was for the document to be completed by the end of summer 2016.
- The “plan” includes three (3) major focus areas.
- The strategies of the “plan” cannot and should not be implemented in one year but rather phased in over several years.

Current State of Arkansas Education

- Graduation rates are the highest they have every been.
- College remediation rates are the lowest they have been since these statistics were first tracked in 1994.

Current State of Arkansas Education

- AR increases in NAEP scores between 2003-2013, relative to what they might have been expected based on changes in student demographics, ranked 8th. (“Breaking the Curve” Report, Urban Institute, 2015)

Current State of Arkansas Education

- AR has been successful in closing the achievement gap. Between 2000-2013, the performance gap between white & black students & between poverty & non-poverty students decreased in every tested area. (NAEP)

Current State of Arkansas Education

- In 2015, 51% of AR students took at least one AP exam (3rd highest in the nation), compared to 24% in 2005. AR students earned 45,000+ credit hours resulting in \$11,000,000 savings in college tuition.
- In 2015, students also accumulated 116,000+ concurrent credit hours.

Current State of Arkansas Education

- The 2016 Kids Count report shows that Arkansas has made gains in 3 of the 4 measured education areas. The state has increased 4th reading proficiency, 8th math proficiency, & high school graduation rates. The only area not showing improvement is the number of children in pre-K programs.



Focus Area #1

**“Developing a
Student-
Centered
Environment”**

- AAEEA believes that a comprehensive plan is essential to ensure that all aspects of a child's education work together to improve his/her learning.



- This plan addresses physical, social/emotional, and academic needs of children, while removing barriers to student learning and preparing students for success after high school.
- Each focus area includes recommended school initiatives and policy recommendations.

Schools Should.....

- Develop/enhance intervention procedures, such as RTI.
- Support the development of rigorous and innovative learning opportunities.
- Advocate for adequate levels of resources and flexibility.

Schools Should.....

- Encourage parent/community engagement through enhanced outreach.
- Raise awareness of the importance of student/staff attendance and the devastating effects of chronic absenteeism.
- Bring local social networks together to solve problems and issues for kids.

Schools Should.....

- Provide quality PD to educators in providing learning opportunities for advanced learners.
- Provide relevant CTE opportunities that meet the needs of both students and community.

Schools Should.....

- Provide access to high-quality early childhood programs for all children beginning with those in highest need.
- Advocate for high-speed Internet connectivity for every school and community to ensure equity and availability.

Policy Recommendations

- Yearly COLAs on all categorical funding.
- Invest for the future with universal access to quality pre-K programs.
- Invest in developing a quality workforce by expanding CTE opportunities to meet the needs of students and the business community.

Policy Recommendations

- Eliminate certification restrictions that hinder the employment of quality CTE instructors.
- Revisit graduation requirements with CTE opportunities in mind. Integrating core subjects into CTE classes.

Policy Recommendations

- Ensure high-speed Internet connectivity for all communities.
- Invest resources for career counselors, social workers, & behavior specialists in schools with the most pressing needs.

Policy Recommendations

Focus Area #1

- Provide Community Health Centers in areas of the state where students have limited access to quality health care.
- Continue allowing districts the flexibility to make local decisions based on identified needs of students and communities.

Policy Recommendations

- Support/expand programs that allow students to earn college credit and industry certifications while still in high school.



Focus Area #2

**“Attracting, Developing,
Supporting, & Retaining
Quality Teachers &
Administrators”**

- To ensure meaningful instruction, we must attract and support high quality teachers and administrators.



- All schools, especially those in high-need areas, must have quality educators in classrooms and leadership positions.
- Encourage our best to enter education, strengthen educator preparation programs (EPPs), and strengthen support programs for those new in the field.

Schools Should.....

- Support principals in both roles of instructional leaders & building managers.
- Provide adequate instructional support to teachers.

Schools Should.....

- Provide ongoing, quality PD at the ESC and district level aligned to individual needs and school/district goals.
- Encourage educators to attend PD that is aligned with the educational improvement goals of their school.

Schools Should.....

- Stress the importance of PLCs to enhance student learning.
- Support local, regional, and state programs that would increase the number of quality teacher candidates.

Schools Should.....

- Provide competitive teacher salaries within the constraints of local budgets.
- Identify, encourage, and mentor teacher leaders at quality potential administrators.

Policy Recommendations

- Maintain flexibility in NSLA rules that allow these funds to be spent on teacher support personnel.
- Provide additional resources through the funding matrix for an additional building-level administrator to support daily school operations.

Policy Recommendations

- Provide statewide consistency in EPPs to include a thorough understanding of professional standards, teaching standards and teacher evaluation.
- Study the effectiveness of current administrator prep programs within the state to determine the best method to insure effectiveness.

Policy Recommendations

- Raise & maintain average teacher salaries, at a minimum, to the average of SREB state & reduce salary disparity across the state.
- Streamline the educator certification process in the CTE area.

Policy Recommendations

- Streamline the educator certification process in high-need, high-demand areas such as Special Education.
- Increase funding in the matrix to provide adequate resources to meet current Standards for Accreditation for district less than 500 ADM.

Policy Recommendations

- Develop enhanced Lottery scholarships for education majors in shortage areas.
- Enhance an educational loan forgiveness/scholarship program and/or state income tax relief for teaching in high priority areas of the state.

Policy Recommendations

- Provide reduced tuition at state institutions for those entering EPPs.
- Provide resources for an advertising campaign to attract the best students to enter the teaching profession, especially in high need areas.



Focus Area #3

**“Developing a Shared
Accountability Plan”**

- Educators should be held to the highest professional standards and be accountable for student outcomes.



- At the same time, governance should provide adequate funding and sound, reasonable policies that support student learning.
- The influx of legislative changes affecting education in Arkansas in the past 5 years have been disruptive.

Schools Should.....

- Determine student success by multiple measures.
- Protect the instructional day by establishing a stable, balanced accountability system that allows for long-term planning, maximum learning time, and student growth for the whole child.

Schools Should.....

- Encourage the adoption of computer-adaptive state assessments that are responsive to students below and above grade level.
- Encourage the state to develop a school grading system that is simple, clear to all, easily understood, and uses multiple measures.

Schools Should.....

- Support policies in regard to the new ESSA law to allow for flexibility in providing greater opportunities for all underserved learners.
- Collaborate with ADE, ACE, and institutions of higher education to remove barriers, eliminate bureaucracy, and develop easier paths that support student learning and opportunities.

Policy Recommendations

- Modify the A-F grading system for schools to include multiple measures.
- Support the adequacy process by making policy decisions based on valid research and provide the necessary resources to implement.

Policy Recommendations

- Provide COLAs to foundation funding to support student learning and closing the achievement gap.
- Increase the minimum teacher salary schedule, including fringe benefits, the same percentage as annual COLA to foundation funding.

Policy Recommendations

- Support new laws/initiatives with adequate funding to implement.
- Provide adequate funding of the Facility Partnership Program to support identified facility needs.

Policy Recommendations

- Support Special Education Catastrophic Funding for identified student needs.
- Fund a high cost transportation category for those districts with an extremely high number of route miles within their boundaries.

Policy Recommendations

- Study the impact of choice laws including charter schools on various areas such as poverty, racial balance, student achievement, staffing, facilities, etc.
- Provide the ADE with adequate resources to support struggling schools.

Policy Recommendations

- Provide adequate resources, training, and field support to schools regarding mandated financial, facility, and student applications and requirements.
- Utilize the Court Ordered Desegregation funds as part of the Public School Fund budget or transfer those dollars into the Facility Partnership Program.

Policy Recommendations

- Pass no unfunded mandates.
- Reinstitute the portion of fiscal impact statement that address the financial impact of new laws on local school budgets, not just the state budget.

Policy Recommendations

- Support ADE efforts to eliminate unnecessary and duplicated paperwork and reports.
- Proposed legislative bills impacting education should run through the education committees to ensure the financial cost upon schools are realized.

What Do We Hope to Achieve?



- Enhancing student achievement
- Closing the achievement gap
- Assisting the business community in developing a skilled workforce

What Do We Hope to Achieve?

- Preparing all students for success beyond high school



Most Frequent Responses

What are the most important characteristics of your school?

- Parent/Community Engagement*
- Effective Teachers and Leaders
- Student Focused Learning



Most Frequent Responses

What are the best measures of success/quality of your school?

- Graduation Rate*
- Attendance
- Student Growth
 - “Growth by one year, no matter where they are”
 - Individual growth in multiple areas



Most Frequent Responses

How do we make sure every student in Arkansas has an opportunity for success?

- Recruiting, retaining, and supporting effective teachers and leaders.*
- Student Focused system
 - Remove “Smart Core” and “Core” from Legislation
- Personalized Learning
 - “Removing the stigma of everyone going to college” ask students, “what’s your next step, not where are you going to college?”



Excellent Teachers and Leaders

Survey Responses



What do you consider the most important characteristics/qualifications for your child/grandchild's teacher

- Passion for Teaching 35.5%
- Certification/Licensure 13.7%
- Other 13.5%
- Ability to Build Positive Relationships 11.1%
- College Degree 10.5%
- Evidence of Success with Students 7%
- Field Experiences (pre-service/alternative preparation/ in-service) 4.6%
- Job-related Experience 2.4%
- Professionalism 1.9%

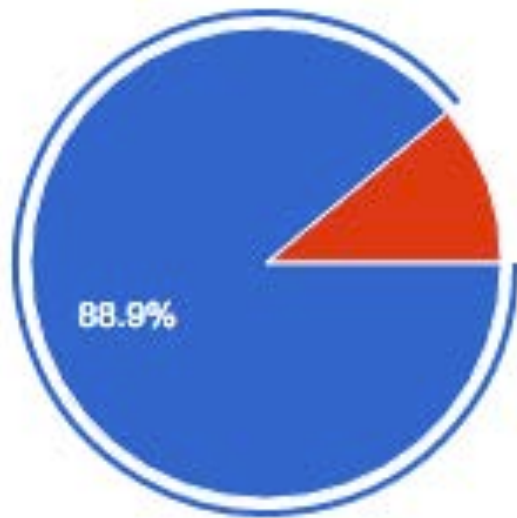


What do you consider the most important characteristics/qualifications for your child/grandchild's school and district administrators.

- Certification/Licensure 28.8%
- Experience 11.1%
- Ability to Build Positive Relationships 35%
- Professionalism 15.6%
- Demonstrated Instructional Leaders 22.6%
- Demonstrated Organizational Leaders 12.9%
- Community Leadership 8.1%
- Positive Interactions with Parents/Guardians 14%



Does your child/grandchild have access to a team of educators who have the desired qualifications (That you ranked in the above questions)?



Yes	330	88.9%
No	41	11.1%



If you answered no to “access to a qualified team of qualified educators”-why? (Most frequent responses.)

– Inconsistent and ineffective leadership

- Administrators who don't support teachers
- Administrators who do not build positive relationships in the school and community
- Administrators who do not have enough training to be instructional leaders
- **No access or consistent access to properly trained teachers.**
 - High absenteeism of teachers
 - no teachers available so long term subs are used
 - using paraprofessionals for interventions instead of the most highly qualified for the neediest students



What are some of the strategies our state might investigate or continue to: attract, prepare, support and retain educators?

- Financial incentives-loan forgiveness, higher pay, extra pay for teaching in a high need area, lower insurance cost, scholarships or financial incentives to choose teaching as a profession
- Remove so many regulations on teachers and schools
- Support teachers-trust them to teach, lessen the amount of paperwork



Follow up questions



Additional Questions for Consideration



TERMINOLOGY

Student Focused Education

Quality Learning Standards

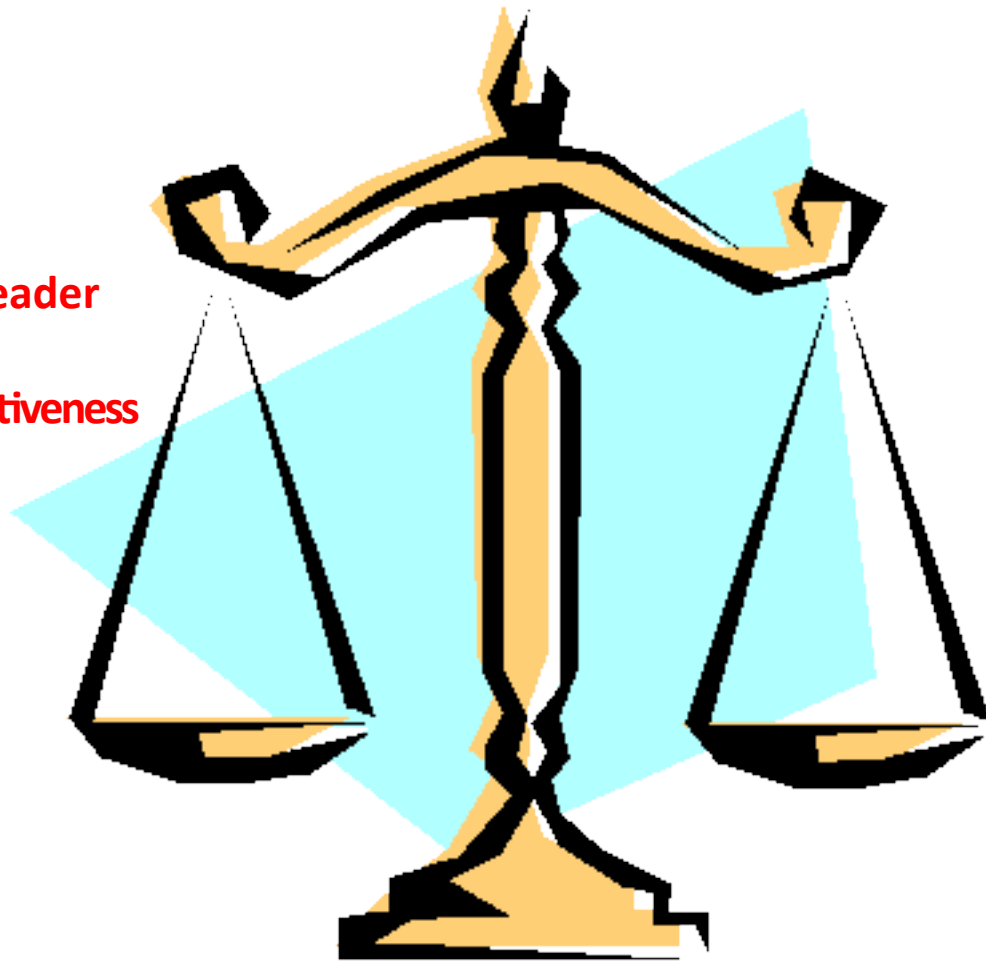
**Excellent Teachers
and Leaders -
excellence in
teaching and
learning**

Flexible,
comprehensive
Assessment Systems

Flexible, Comprehensive State Accountability System

**Teacher and Leader
Quality
-Effectiveness**

**Flexibility and Responsiveness
to
Needs**





EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EXCELLENT EDUCATORS

Every child deserves to be surrounded by a team of excellent educators every year....

If we want every student to succeed, it is vital that we surround them with the most effective teachers and leaders possible and support their ongoing work.



05/25



Effective School Leader

- **An instructional leader with strong ethics and an unyielding commitment to students, who:**
 - through experience and preparation/training, meets the proficient or exemplary designation on evaluations and can expertly facilitate school change and improvement;
 - through a deep commitment to the education system, advocates, nurtures, and sustains a safe and secure environment for staff and students and an instructional program, which are conducive to student learning and supportive of teacher personal and professional growth; and
 - collaborates with community members, to mobilize community resources and respond to diverse community and cultural interests and needs.

Effective Teacher

- **An educator with strong ethics and an unyielding commitment to students, who:**
 - through experience and preparation/training, is an expert in his or her field as evidenced by proficient or distinguished designation on evaluations, and constantly improves his or her practice; and
 - through a deep commitment to student learning, motivates student to learn, brings about the learning progress needed to close achievement gaps among students of all cultures, socioeconomic levels, and learning abilities, and cultivates higher-order thinking skills.

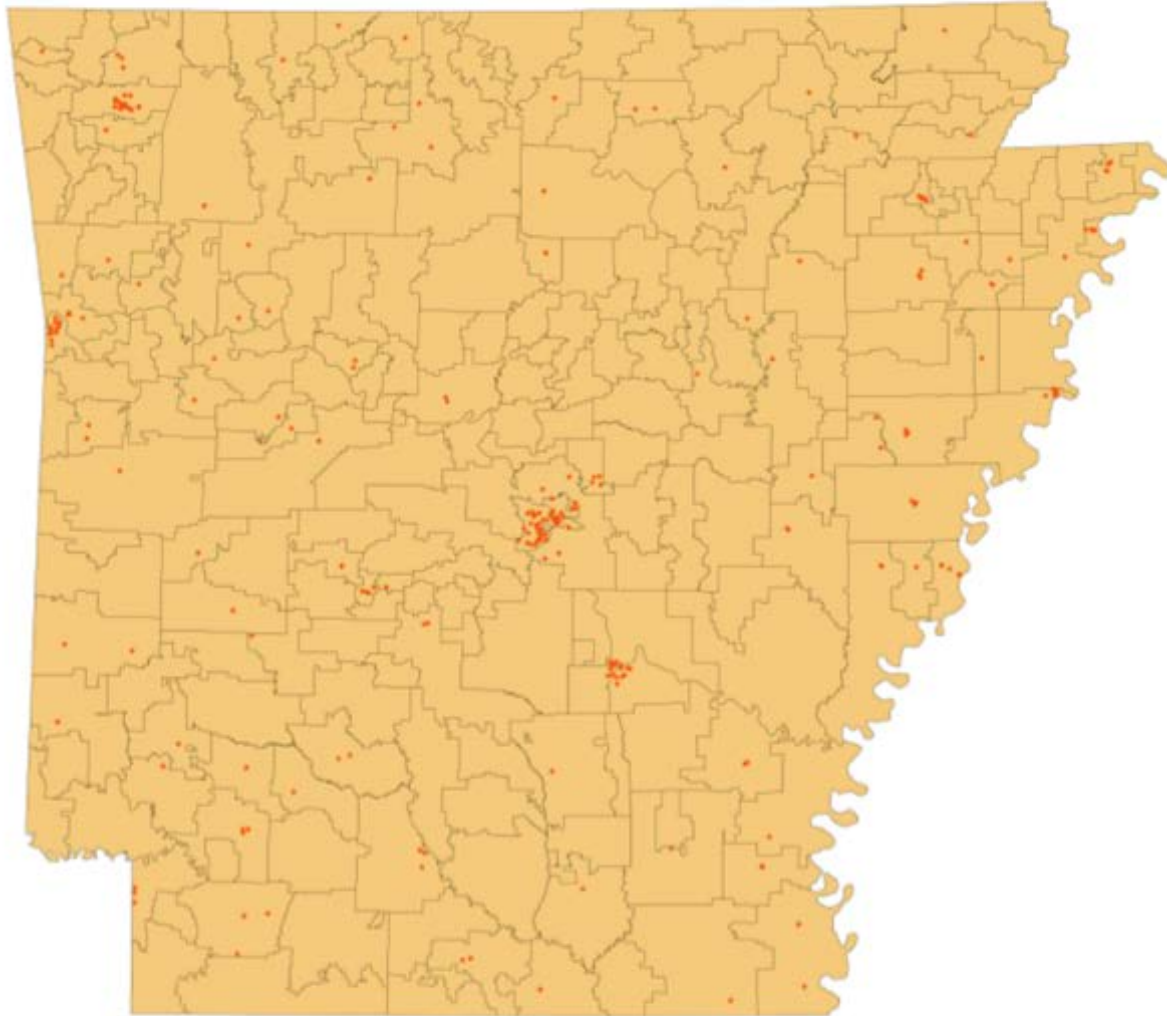
Table 3B.3. Poverty and Minority definitions and parameters (2015-2016).

		Range	Median
Poverty Measures	High Poverty Schools – Schools in the highest 25% of all schools ranked by % F/RL (269 schools)	77.98% - 100.00%	85.91%
	Low Poverty Schools – Schools in the lowest 25% of all schools ranked by % F/RL (268 schools)	0.00% - 52.85%	41.24%
Minority Measures	High Minority Schools – Schools in the highest 25% of all schools ranked by % non-white students* (269 schools)	55.63% - 100.00%	77.81%
	Low Minority Schools – Schools in the lowest 25% of all schools ranked by % non-white students (268 schools)	0.00% – 9.61%	5.99%

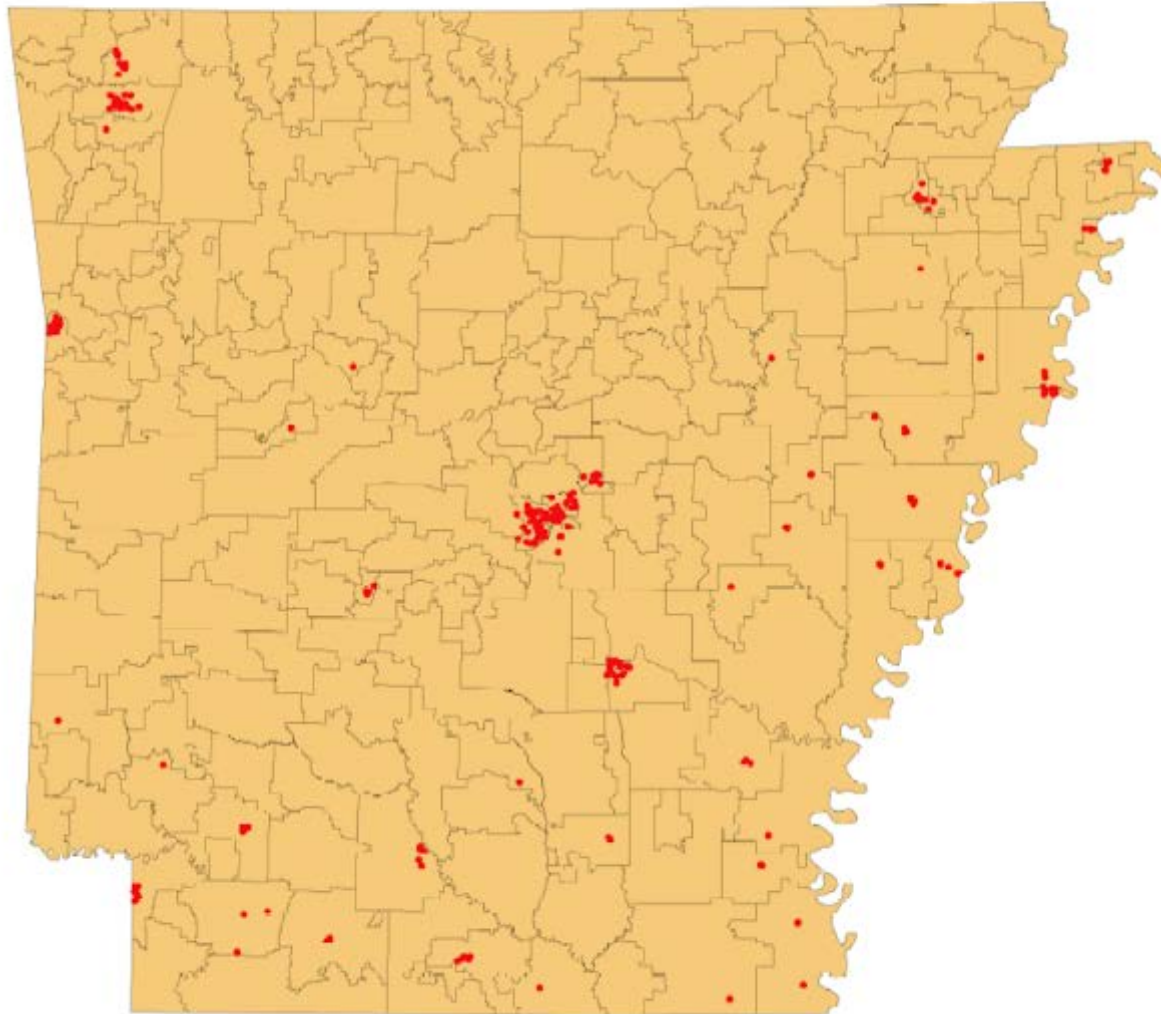
Table 3B.2. Demographic, poverty, and minority data for Arkansas schools (updated)

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Number of Schools	1,073	1,064	1,054
Number of Schools in each Quartile	269	266	264
Number of Districts	258	257	259
Total Number of Teachers	39,099	39,672	40,742
Total Student Enrollment	474,995	476,083	490,695
Enrollment in High Poverty Schools	100,404	98,129	105,582
Enrollment in Low Poverty Schools	157,062	155,942	162,218
Enrollment in High Minority Schools	127,151	128,884	134,403
Enrollment in Low Minority Schools	89,735	90,823	96,309
Number (and %) of Students in Poverty¹			
All Schools Students in Poverty	289,215 (60.89%)	294,339 (61.83%)	299,755 (61.09%)
Highest Poverty Quartile Schools (HP)	88,131 (87.78%)	88,450 (90.14%)	91,378 (86.55%)
Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools (LP)	61,744 (39.31%)	61,034 (39.14%)	61,928 (38.18%)
Number (and %) of Minority Students²			
All Schools Minority Students	173,999 (36.63%)	177,760 (37.34%)	186,767 (38.06%)
Highest Minority Quartile Schools (HM)	96,275 (75.72%)	98,042 (76.07%)	103,088 (76.70%)
Lowest Minority Quartile Schools (LM)	4,887 (5.45%)	5,394 (5.94%)	6,091 (6.32%)

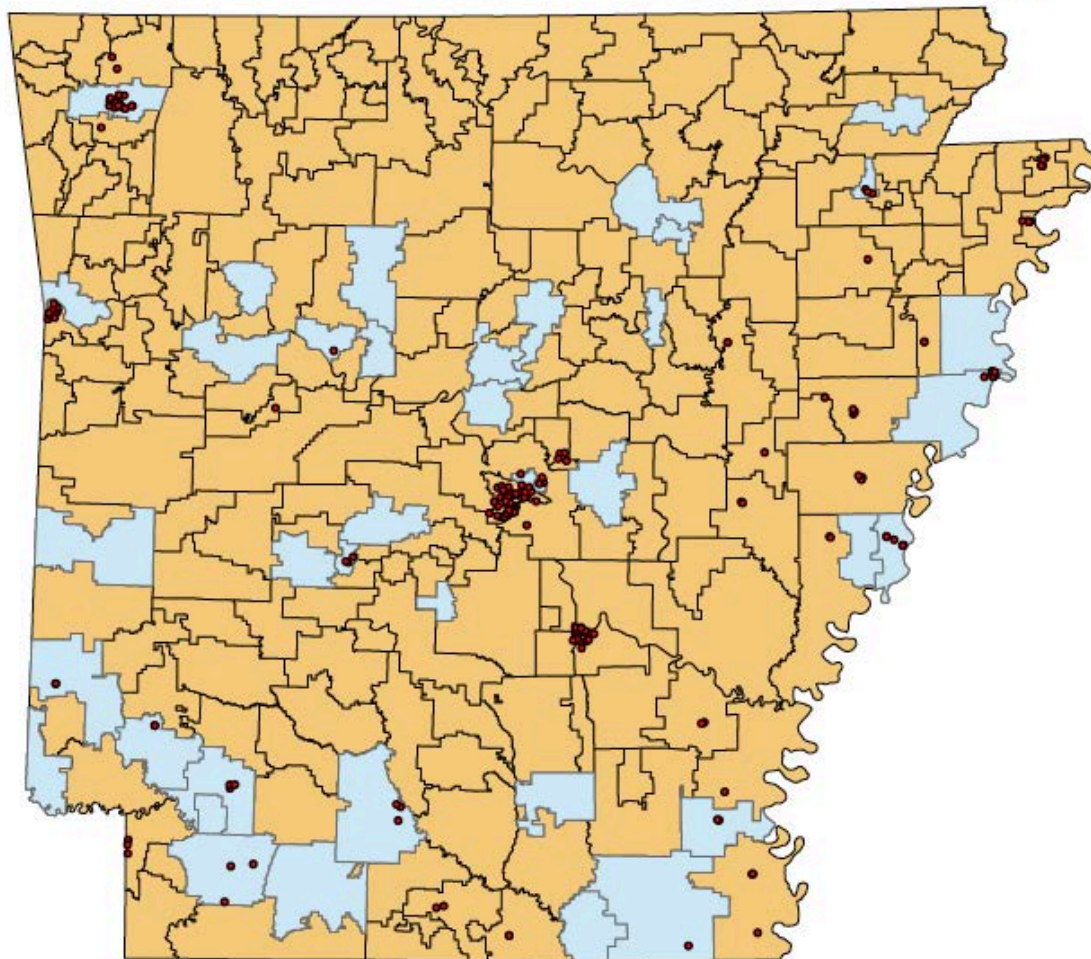
High Poverty Schools 2015-2016



High Minority Schools 2015-2016



Schools that are both High Poverty and High Minority 2015-2016
and Districts with Teacher Cadets Program 2016-2017



Legend

• High Poverty and Minority Schools

2016-2017 Districts with Teacher Cadets Program

Here's what we know...Equity Gaps

- Students in high poverty and high minority schools are more likely to have an ***inexperienced teacher*** than students in low poverty and low minority schools.
- Students in high poverty schools are more likely to have an ***out-of-field teacher*** than students in low poverty schools.
- Students in high poverty and high minority schools are more likely to have an ***unqualified teacher*** than students in low poverty and low minority schools.
- ***Attrition***: Teachers leave HP and HM schools at a higher rate than teachers at LP and LM schools. Teachers at HP and HM schools also leave at a rate greater than the state average, while teachers in LP and LM schools leave at a lower rate than the state average.

ESSA Changes and Challenges



Focus on the Educator Workforce



Attract, Prepare, Develop, Support... to Retain

Multiple Pathways to Teaching and Leading

Induction and Mentorship

Meaningful Evaluation and Support

Strong Teacher Leadership

Transformative School Leadership



Changes in Required Definitions: Equitable Access Plan to ESSA plan

- *Ineffective* teacher: New requirement
- Out-of-field teacher
- *Inexperienced* teacher: Is a change needed?
- Low-income *student*: Include student level impact- beyond school-level
- Minority *student*

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

- States must ensure that low-income and minority children are not served at **disproportionate** rates by *ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers*, and describe the measures the State educational agency will use to evaluate and publicly report the progress
 - **calculations of disproportionality** will be **conducted** and **reported** statewide using data that is similar across districts.
 - must be conducted using **student level data**, subject to appropriate privacy protections.
- Identify steps state will take if calculations of disproportionality determine that low-income or minority students are taught at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers,
 - conducting a root cause analysis to identify the underlying causes or contributing factors of any disproportionalities that exist, and describe the strategies, timelines, and funding sources to eliminate the identified disproportionality.

DEFINING *INEFFECTIVE* TEACHERS

CHALLENGES?

CONSIDERATIONS?

CONCERNS?

Defining *Ineffective* Teachers

1. Define Ineffective Teacher Using Current Systems/ Measures of effectiveness;
2. Re-tool Current Systems/ Measures of effectiveness;
3. Develop/Use a New Measure;
4. Leave it Up to Local Discretion; or
5. Take Another Approach?

What are the *Pros* and *Cons* of each approach?

ESSA and required reporting

- State and LEA report cards to include
 - the professional qualifications of teachers, including information on the number and percentage of:
 - (1) *Inexperienced* teachers, principals, and other school leaders; (2) teachers teaching with *emergency or provisional* credentials; (3) teachers who are *not teaching in the subject or field* for which the teacher is *certified or licensed*.
 - This section requires that the information be presented in the aggregate and disaggregated by high-poverty compared to low-poverty schools.

The Title II, Part A federal program

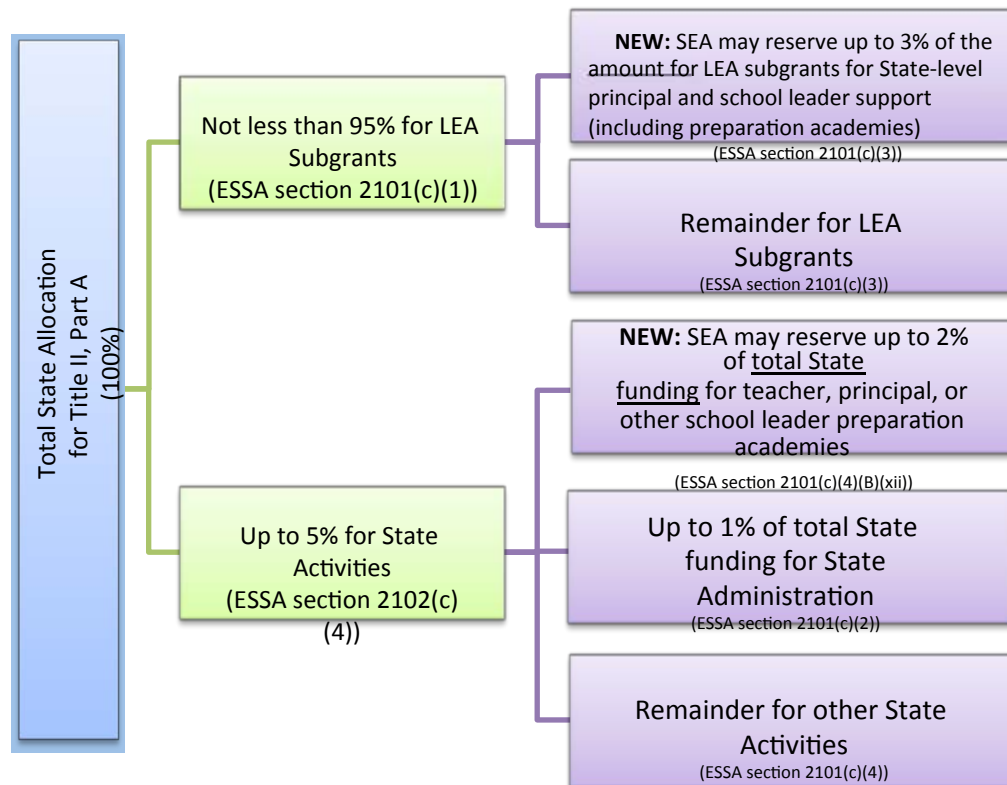
- Designed, among other things, to provide students from low-income families and minority students with greater access to effective educators.
- Funding allocation changes by 2020
- Encourages SEAs and LEAs to use their Title II, Part A funds **more strategically** and for **greater impact**.
 - ESSA: new opportunities for SEAs and LEAs to more effectively attract, select, place, support, and retain excellent educators
 - Encourage SEAs and LEAS to re-visit traditional uses of these funds and consider new and additional uses of Title II, Part A funds that are innovative and *evidence-based*.
 - More state authority to “guide” districts to effective use

Understanding the Use of Title II, Part A Funding

Title II Section 2001	To increase the academic achievement of all students by helping schools and districts (1) improve teacher and principal quality through professional development and other activities and (2) ensure all teachers are highly qualified.	Based on the number of individuals aged 5 through 17 in the area served by the school district.	Teachers and school leaders
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Generally, the amount of funds reserved for spending at the SEA and LEA levels has not changed with the reauthorization of the ESSA. However, Title II, Part A of the ESSA includes new optional SEA reservations of funds for principal and school leader support and teacher, principal, or other school leader preparation academies.

The Flow of Title II, Part A Funding

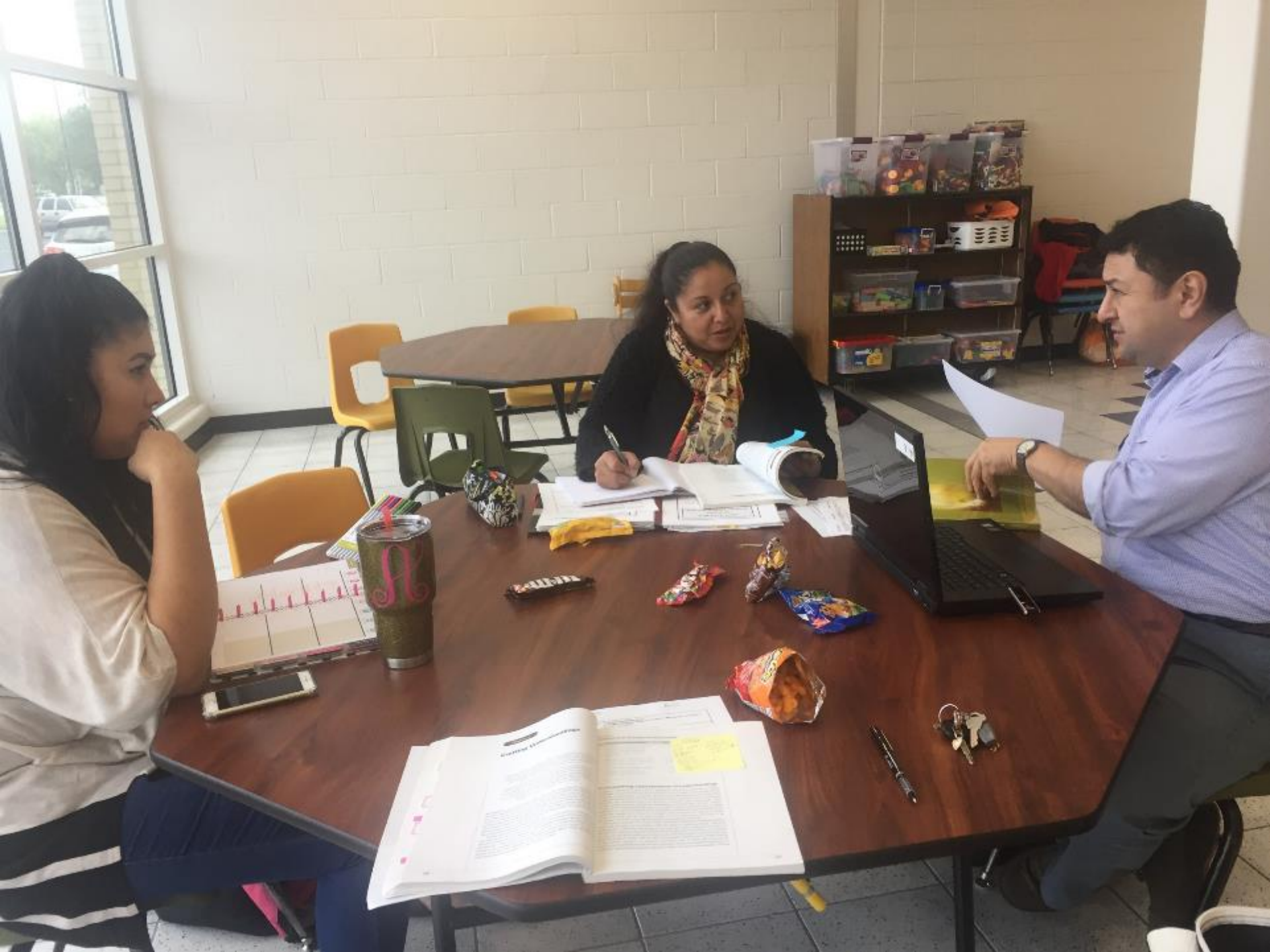


PILOT Project MAESTRO

- Target Group: NW AR Bilingual/Bicultural IAs with approximately 60 hours of credit
- Often first 60 hours come from NWACC
- 3 year program at U of A
- PELL Grants/Loans/UA Scholarships/Fellowships
- Springdale school provides release time to attend classes at 3:00 or 4:00 on UA Campus
- Advising and mentoring support
- ADE allows half of internship hours to be IA's work with small groups of students.
- ESL endorsement classes required
- Upon completion of program, commit to district for 3 years

Advantages

- Paraprofessionals have commitment to district with ties to district via family/community etc.
- Principals have endorsed paraprofessionals as having dispositions and abilities to become teachers via letters of recommendation.
- Principals/district have committed to hiring paraprofessionals when they obtain teaching certificate as teachers for their campus/district



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Southside School District

- Grow our own
 - Teacher Cadet
 - Certified Teaching Assistant
- Share our profession
- Share the pathways to our profession
- Collaborate with Teacher Prep Programs